REMARKS

Claim Status

Claims 1-36 were originally presented for examination in this application, including independent claims 1, 6, 8, 27, 29 and 33. An office action was issued on May 16, 2005, and an Amendment and Response was filed on August 11, 2005 in response thereto, addressing each of the rejections. A final office action was issued on September 16, 2005, in which the claim amendments were entered, but rejected. A subsequent amendment after final was filed on November 15, 2005, but refused entry in an Advisory Action, issued on December 8, 2005. In response, a Request for Continued Examination was filed on December 15, 2005, and in response the amendments submitted in the November 15, 2005 response were entered. On March 1, 2006, an office action was issued rejecting claims 1-36, to which a response was filed on May 23, 2006. A final office action ("Office Action") was issued on July 5, 2006, in which claims 1-36 were rejected.

As a result, claims 1-28 stand rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentably obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,587,438 to Brendel ("Brendel") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,031,309 to Sautter et al. ("Sautter"). Claims 29-31 stand rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentably obvious in view of Brendel and Sautter, and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20040025057 to Cook ("Cook"). In response, Applicants submit this paper in which claims 1, 6, 8, 27 and 29 have been amended.

No new matter has been introduced by these amendments, support therefor being found throughout the specification, as well as in claims 1-36 as originally filed. Applicants submit that the claim amendments recited above duly comply with the requirements of 37 C.F.R 1.116 and respectfully request entry of these claim amendments.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Independent Claims 1 and 8

Independent claims 1 and 8, as amended, recite splitting a file into message segments and assigning different final destination addresses to each segment, where each of the final destination addresses is assigned to a single receiving host. As recognized by the Examiner, Brendel does not describe using different final destination addresses. For this, the Examiner relies on the destination node addresses described by Sautter. Office Action, pg. 3. Sautter not only fails to describe destination addresses assigned to a single receiving host as claimed, but in fact, the very passage relied upon by the Examiner states that "each destination node address identifies a different final destination." Col. 40 line 27 (emphasis added).

Briefly, Sautter describes a network protocol having multi-addressing capabilities that allow a single message to be sent to numerous users. Using this approach, each receiving node receives a complete file; however, each segment received at any one host bears the same destination address – the destination address of that particular host. In contrast, Applicants' claimed invention assigns different final destination addresses to file segments that are nonetheless being sent to the same destination host. Sautter simply does not teach or suggest this approach. Instead, Sautter uses the "different addresses" to route segments of a single message to different final destinations. While such a technique may achieve certain processing and bandwidth utilization benefits, it provides no security benefits, and in fact jeopardizes the security of any one transmission by sending it to multiple destinations. Applicants' invention, by contrast, enhances the security of any one transmission by using different addresses, thus masking the final destination of any one segment, even though the ultimate destination of each segment is the same. As a result, individual file segments arrive at the intended destination, yet none of the segments carry enough information to permit an intruder intercepting the packets to reconstruct the file.

Accordingly, neither Brendel nor Sautter alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 8 as amended, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable. Without acquiescing to the rejection of claims 2-5 and 9-26,

Applicants note that these claims depend directly or indirectly from either claim 1 or claim 8 and include all the limitations thereof, and thus are also patentable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-5 and 8-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 6 and 27

Independent claims 6 and 27 recite using multiple different initial source addresses, each of which is assigned to a single source host. As explained above, Brendel does not contemplate using different initial source addresses, and Sautter merely describes using sending file segments to _different_ destinations using different destination addresses. Unlike the systems described by Brendel and Sautter, Applicants' claimed invention assigns one of multiple different addresses, all of which are assigned to a _single_ source host, to each file segment of a file in preparation for transmission over a network. As a result, individual file segments do not carry enough information to reveal which packets belong to any particular file or the host from which they originated. Thus, in contrast to both Brendel and Sautter, the file segments of one file are transmitted with different source information and, therefore, in a substantially more secure manner.

Accordingly, neither Brendel nor Sautter alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the subject matter of independent claims 6 and 27, as amended, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable. Without acquiescing to the rejection of claims 7 and 28, Applicants note that these claims depend directly from either claim 6 or claim 27 and include all the limitations thereof, and thus are also patentable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6, 7, 27 and 28 under U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 29

Independent claim 29, as amended, recites splitting a file into a plurality of message segments in which each message segment includes one of a plurality of different final destination specifiers, where each of the final destination specifiers is attributed to a _single_ final destination host.

As described above with respect to claims 1 and 8, neither Brendel nor Sautter describe assigning multiple different final destination specifiers to a single destination host.

Accordingly, neither Brendel nor Sautter alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the subject matter of independent claim 29, as amended, Applicants respectfully submit that this claim is allowable. Without acquiescing to the rejection of claims 30-32, Applicants note that these claims depend directly from claim 29 and include all the limitations thereof, and thus are also patentable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 29-32 under U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 33

Claim 33 recites, in part, "assigning each host of a plurality of hosts to a first domain of a plurality of domains" and "restricting network traffic to message transmissions among hosts within the same domain or neighboring domains." None of Brendel, Sautter or Cook teach or suggest such limitations. In fact, none of these references make any mention of restricting network traffic to hosts within a particular domain.

In light of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of independent claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as well as claims 35-36 that depend either directly or indirectly therefrom, is respectfully requested.
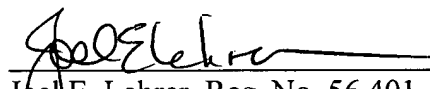
CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that, in light of the foregoing remarks, claims 1-36 are in condition for allowance, and request that application proceed to issue. If, in the Examiner's opinion, another telephonic interview would expedite the favorable prosecution of the present application, the undersigned attorney would welcome the opportunity to discuss any outstanding issues and to work with the Examiner toward placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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